

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-54. (Canceled)

55. (Currently Amended) A tissue fastener comprising  
a shaft;

~~having~~ a generally rigid member disposed on the shaft~~thereon~~ for lodging the shaft within  
soft tissue, and

a generally rigid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft and having a  
maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional  
length of the shaft, the tissue fastener having a longitudinal axis extending along a maximum  
possible length from an outer end of the member to an outer end of the head, and the head having  
a maximum longitudinal cross-sectional length along the longitudinal axis shorter than the  
maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the head,

~~a region substantially an entire length~~ of the shaft extending from the member to the head  
being formed of a woven mesh providing transverse flexibility and longitudinal extensibility to  
render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

56. (Canceled)

57. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the member and the  
head are molded onto the mesh.

58. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the member comprises at least one barb.

59. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the fastener is made from polymeric material.

60. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the fastener is made from bioabsorbable material.

61. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the shaft is hollow and defines an interior passage, the head including an opening in communication with the passage.

62. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 61 wherein the passage is open at a distal end of the shaft.

63. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 61 wherein the passage is closed at a distal end of the shaft.

64. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the head has a flat distal surface.

65. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 55 wherein the head has a toothed distal surface.

66. (Currently Amended) A tissue fastener comprising

a hollow shaft defining a ~~first substantially void interior~~ passage along an entire length of the shaft and having an outer wall at least partially defining an exterior surface of the tissue fastener, and

a generally rigid member disposed on the shaft for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, the generally rigid member defining a second passage along an entire length of the generally rigid member, and

a generally rigid, solid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the hollow shaft,

the shaft being relatively flexible between the member and the head to render the head movable with respect to the shaft and a region of the shaft being formed of a flexible material providing transverse flexibility and longitudinal extensibility.

67. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 66 wherein the shaft comprises a mesh extending between the member and the head.

68. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 66 wherein the head includes an opening in communication with the passage.

69-80. (Canceled)

81. (Currently Amended) A tissue fastener comprising  
a hollow shaft defining a ~~first substantially void interior~~ passage along an entire length of the shaft and having an outer wall at least partially defining an exterior surface of the tissue fastener, and

a generally rigid member disposed on the shaft for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, the generally rigid member defining a second passage along an entire length of the generally rigid member, and

a generally rigid solid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft, the head including an opening in communication with the first passage and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the hollow shaft,

a region of the shaft being relatively flexible to provide transverse flexibility and longitudinal extensibility and to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

82. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the region comprises substantially an entire length of the shaft.

83. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the region comprises a woven mesh.

84. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the region comprises a mesh.

85. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 84 wherein the shaft comprises a mesh material, the member and the head being molded onto the mesh.

86. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the member comprises at least one barb.

87. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 wherein the head is disposed at the relatively flexible region of the shaft.

88. (Previously Presented) The tissue fastener of claim 81 made from bioabsorbable material.

89-91. (Canceled)

92. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 55, wherein the entire length of the shaft extending from the member to the head is formed of a woven mesh providing transverse flexibility and longitudinal extensibility to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

93. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 58, wherein the at least one barb includes a flat, inclined exterior surface:

94. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 93, wherein the flat, inclined exterior surface slopes outwardly as the at least one barb extends proximally towards the tissue engaging head.

95. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 66, wherein the entire length of the shaft extending from the member to the head is relatively flexible to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.

96. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 66, wherein the first passage comprises a substantially void interior passage.

97. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 66, wherein the second passage comprises a substantially void interior passage.

98. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 66, wherein the tissue fastener has a longitudinal axis extending along a maximum possible length from an outer end of the member to an outer end of the head, and the head has a maximum longitudinal cross-sectional length along the longitudinal axis shorter than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the head.

99. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 81, wherein the first passage comprises a substantially void interior passage.

100. (New) The tissue fastener of claim 81, wherein the second passage comprises a substantially void interior passage.

101. (New) A tissue fastener comprising  
a hollow shaft defining a first passage along an entire length of the shaft;  
a generally rigid member disposed on the shaft for lodging the shaft within soft tissue, the generally rigid member defining a second passage along an entire length of the generally rigid member, and

a generally rigid tissue engaging head disposed at an end of the shaft and having a maximum transverse cross-sectional length longer than the maximum transverse cross-sectional length of the shaft,

substantially an entire length of the shaft extending from the member to the head being formed of a woven mesh providing transverse flexibility and longitudinal extensibility to render the head movable with respect to the shaft.